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TRANSLATION IN PERFORMANCE

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Towards a Viable Applied Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Ethnolinguistic Point of View

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The starting point of this paper is that there can be no Applied Translation without Translation Theory (after Corder 1973). The purpose is to suggest that there is a need to reassess the state of the art in Translation Studies in order to explore how to arrive at a viable applied linguistic theory of translation. In the course of the paper, a pre-hypothetical, introspective view of the translation process is introduced, a modified version of Hymes' descriptive taxonomy (1986) is proposed for testing in the Translation Teaching Situation, and lines for progress are underscored. The discussion is part of an ongoing attempt to provide a firm basis for a Theory of Translation. The examples we use are drawn from one language pair, Arabic and English, but their implications have bearings on other language pairs.

1. Introduction: The State of the Art

The practice of translation is as old as two cultures meeting each other[1]. Like the practice of translation, discussions and theories of translation are not new. 'The first coherent theory', Kelly states (1979:8), 'comes from St. Augustine (354-430)'[2]. In his *De Magistro*, Augustine raised issues of great importance for translation: (1) the integrity of the text, (2) and the occasional tension between the rendition of meaning and the rendition of style; (3) he also identified tenor as one of the ingredients of style. Similarly, St. Jerome (347-419) was no mean practising theorist. Perhaps he was the first to touch upon such issues as (1) sense-for-sense, (2) and the inseparability of meaning and style.

While the practice, discussions and theories of translation date back to old times, the term *Übersetzungsdidaktik* (translation

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pedagogy, to borrow the term from Kapp, as quoted by Wilss (1928:177), is relatively modern. Until recently, 'translation teaching was left to individual genius, hard work and self taught technique' (Pan 1977:51). Even today, Reiß's statement that 'there is no systematic method of teaching translation' (1979:229ff) still holds water. The seminal paper written by Krings (1986), partly in response to Toury's criticism of the translation teaching situation, bears witness to this fact.[3]

The impact of linguistics on translation studies can be seen in the works of such pioneers as Nida (1945, 1959, 1964, 1969); Vinay and Darbelnet (1958); and Catford (1965). However, mainstream linguistics fell short of fulfilling the hopes pinned on it with regard to translation for three main reasons: i) form, not meaning, was the major concern; ii) the object of enquiry was not the text in its entirety, but the sentence (from a Standard Average European point of view) in a monolingual act of communication; iii) major emphasis was laid on competence rather than performance. It was not until the advent of such concepts as communicative competence and performance, ethnography of communication, and 'contrastive textology' (Hartmann 1980) that the concerns of translation began to overlap with those of linguistics. Widdowson's insights and explorations in applied linguistics (1979) contributed to bringing the theoretical and practical issues into focus. In this paper we attempt to provide a basis for further progress in Translation Studies.

In our view, the impasse in which Applied Translation finds itself is a repercussion of the focus on the artefacts of translating, thereby failing to examine the process of translating itself. Among the major contributors who stand out as exceptions, as far as we are aware, are Nida (op. cit.), House (1979), and Neubert (1985). It is true that most linguists who showed genuine interest in translation as an exercise in Applied Linguistics did mention the process to a greater or lesser degree (e.g. Catford 1964:vii). However, it is also true that the tentative, speculative and 'conjectural/practical' (Sanders 1987:204) nature of their observations, and their inability to substantiate their observations in terms of testability and replicability

contributed to fostering the 'philological' stance (Nida 1974:1046). It is because of these shortcomings in the process-oriented approaches that many practitioners became disenchanted with the linguistic approach. We can see this in the recent insistence on the unobservability of the process, and the practice of re-constructing the process on the basis of the comparison of two products (Lefevere 1981:53) - an attitude which prompted an open-minded authority like Lefevere to assert that

> [...] knowledge of the translation process is, in fact, personal knowledge that can be transmitted only by actually working with somebody who has given proof that he or she possesses it. Ideally this kind of knowledge would be most profitably transmitted in private tutorials, in which both instructor and learner would tackle the same text (1981:54).

(See also Steiner 1975:273)

We may conclude from these comments and those made by other practitioners and theoreticians (e.g. Newmark 1981:113; Wilss 1982:180) that linguistics did not live up to their expectations. None the less, we can argue that linguistics did not fail the test; what failed until recently was the strategy used by linguistics in the investigation and systematization of translating. It is to be noted that new territories have been opened up by Edmondson (1986), Kupsch-Losereit (1985), Toury (1986), House (1986), Borsch (1986), Krech and Kasper (1986), Gerloff (1986), Krings (1986), and Lorscher (1986). There is no space here to appraise the contributions of these scholars, but it must be said that we still have a long way to go to arrive at a viable applied linguistic theory of translation.

2. An Introspective View of the Translation Process

The crux of the problem in disentangling the process of translation is that the translator assumes a number of interrelated and overlapping roles. In the SLT-reading (i.e. experiencing) stage of the

process, he is a perceiver[4], but simultaneously a producer in so far as he should be able to identify himself with the producer of the SLT. In the writing stage of the process, he assumes the same roles, but with a shift of focus: he plays the role of the producer in the target language (TL), and simultaneously the role of the target language audience in that he must identify himself with the intended language community. (The roles of the translator are schematized in Fig. 1).

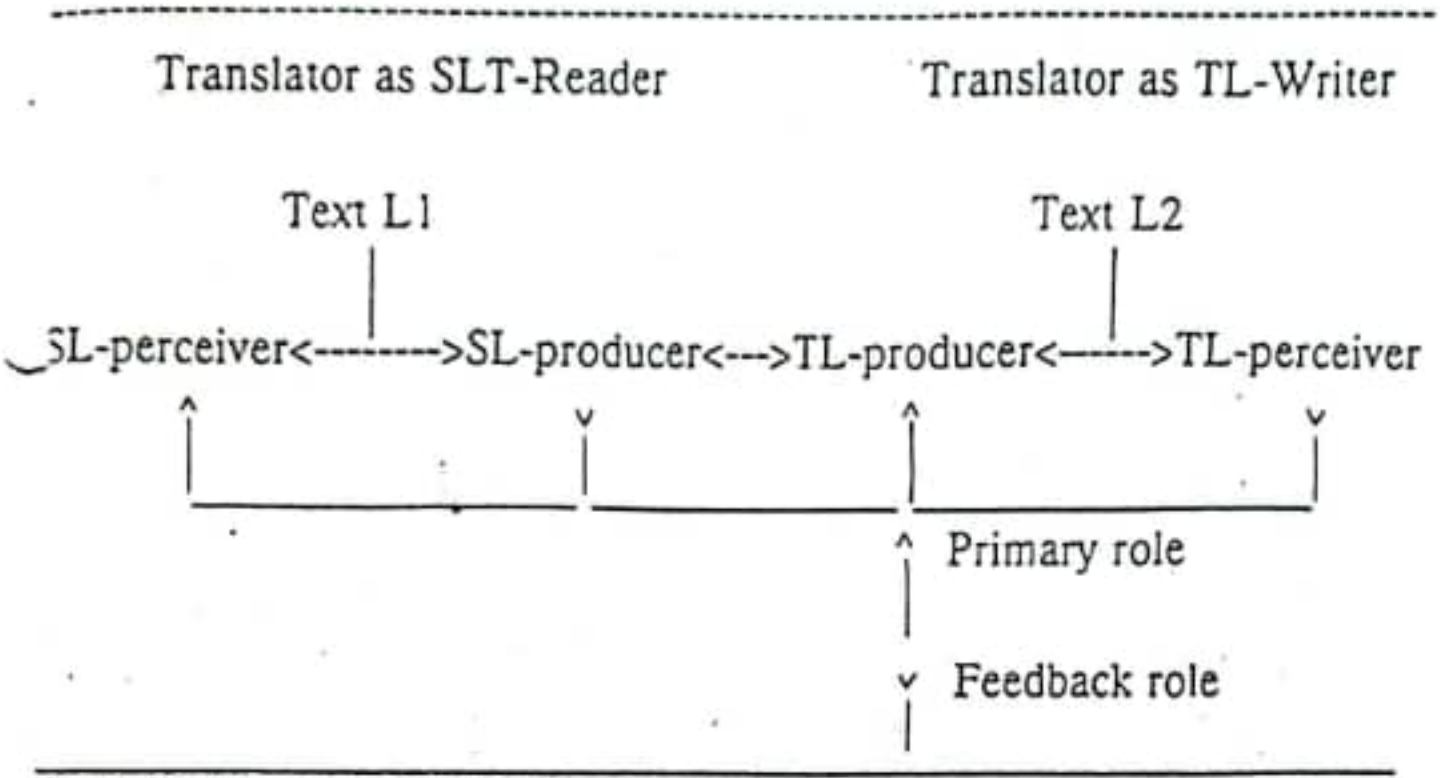

Fig.1 Roles assumed by the translator

As pointed out elsewhere (Sa'Adeddin 1987a:149), 'a good translator takes us into the heart of the text-presented experience, which he interprets and reproduces as a communicative event that fits reasonably with the experiential knowledge of the TA'. Experiences, whether linguistic or other, are encoded in the memory of native speakers by devices available to every member of a language community. Thus, at the most abstract level, the translator may be identified as a text-ethnographer who provides the locus of contact between two world knowledge bases, each endowed with its literary and linguistic practices. Usually this is successfully done by interpreting the SLT in terms of how it is experienced by the SLT-intended audience, and recreating that communicative experience

in line with how it can be optimally equally experienced by the target world audience.

Our current view of the translation process can be summarized in this preliminary diagram

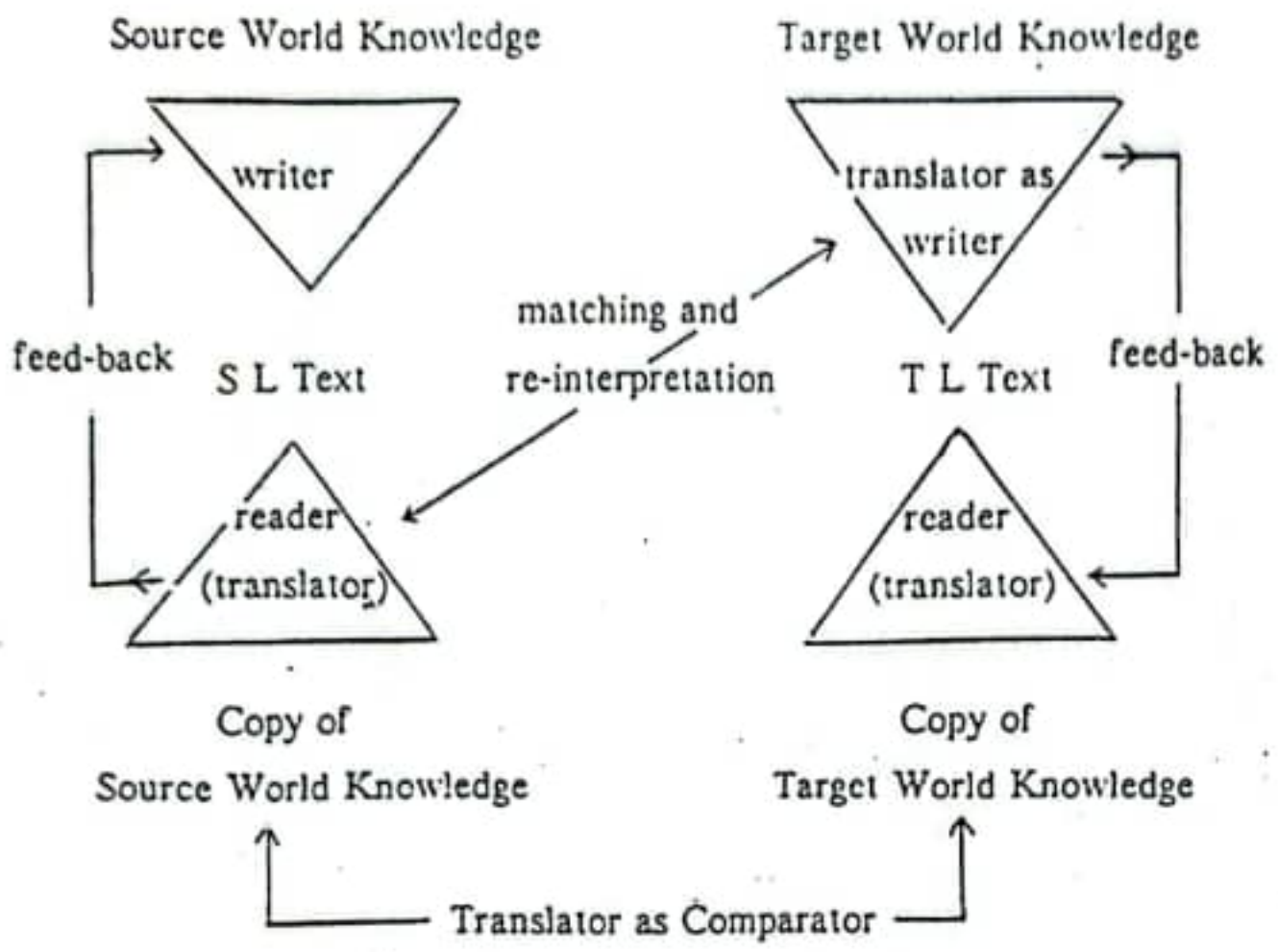

Fig.2 A preliminary diagram of the process of translation

As noted above we see the dominant roles of the translator as being twofold: one as reader of the SLT and (overlapping) one as writer within the TWK with the intention of producing a TLT that attempts to achieve the best experiential match of the 'Copy' of the SLT achieved by the reader-writer empathy. We consider that it is both useful and necessary to keep these two roles separate in the initial stages of the translation teaching situation. But within each role it is necessary to break down the process (which is, of course, always a variable mix of parallel procedures) into as many subordinate procedures as we may find practicable. These procedures may include

text-analysis, negotiation, expectation, appropriation, etc. (See Sa'Adeddin 1988:223), if applicable. This reduction of a complex problem into as many sub-components as possible is in line with Descartes' suggestion, as Mulder (1980:13) puts it:

> 'If one has a multi-level approach [...] great simplicity ensues from the fact that on each of the levels one can take for granted, and one need not burden oneself with, what has already been solved or soluble at another level.'

The diagram above is an attempt to give a simplified scheme of the major levels of the process. On each side we have the same pattern: A World Knowledge base, converted into a text by a writer, and 'read' by a reader with a more or less overlapping World Knowledge of the language and language community in question. In each case the reader achieves a copy of the WK base of the writer's mind, mediated through the actual text. It seems clear that much of the failure to develop a coherent view of the translation process derives from failure to see the text, whether in SL or TL, as a dynamic stage, rather than a static element in the middle of a communicative act. It is crucial to reiterate, in spite of the attempts by literary structuralists who focus on 'reading' as an act, that 'Every text [...] unfolds itself in some context of use' (Halliday 1985:xiii); in other words the dynamic context of the intent of the writer and the varying abilities of the readers 'to get the message(s)' are inherent in the physical hypostatisation which is the actual text. Unfortunately a text, particularly in this physical form, appears to be static, but we would argue that this is a dangerous delusion, from which much of translation theory has suffered to its cost. Failure either to understand this aspect of the status of the text, or to make clear the consequences, is a result of the general lack of concern with methodology that Hartmann (1980) has noted.

What is difficult to present in the diagram are the complex roles played by the translator. We have indicated on the left-hand side something of the evaluative procedures that the translator (as reader

of the SLT) applies, in the form of a feedback loop. In parenthesis, the time dimension in such diagrams cannot be presented visually; this is also an aspect of 'reading'. The point we would like to make here is to highlight the need for translators and students of translation alike to be aware of their function as conscious producers of the reader's copy of the SLT writer's SWK on the basis of the text and its societal and situational context. At an early stage of this 'reading' (perhaps normally from the very beginning - this has to be tested), the translator is immediately 'matching and reinterpreting' the SLT reading in terms of his TWK in order to produce the TLT. This interaction is complex enough, but in addition, as shown at the foot of the diagram, the translator is bearing in mind the TLT reader and comparing him with the SLT reader.

Leaving aside the details of the sub-components within this process (or amalgam of processes) here, since some of them have received a measure of attention in earlier publications (1984, 1985b, 1987a, 1987b, 1988), two aspects of this view of the translation process deserve emphasis. The first aspect is that a text represents the WK of a given writer via formal procedures, contextual (as an interlevel in systemic terms) and situational (reverting to culture specific world knowledge again) aspects which a competent translator is expected to apprehend in the SL (which is normally his L2). The second aspect is relevant to the role of the translator as 'interpreter - matcher - reinterpreter' (which we will deal with below), and his task as comparator of the potential TLT reader and his reading and that of the SLT and his, as well as his role as a critic of his own product (cf. Sa'Adeddin, forthcoming a). These aspects seem to us to embody the essence of the process of translation, and to provide the key to what a 'good translator' does, (hence what a student of translation is supposed to learn), and what we should investigate if we are to take translation teaching out of the intuitive and speculative era, and into the descriptive era, which we expect will lead on to the construction of a viable applied-linguistic theory of translation. After all, the analysis of translations which is assumed to be of some benefit for would-be translators does not in fact benefit those who need to be taught. We can argue that the immediate aim of Applied Translation is to

internalize in students of translation the translational underpinnings (habits, strategies and tactics) that will enable them to cope with the most common translation situations.

3. Interpretation and Reinterpretation in Translation

There is a deceptive simplicity in the preliminary diagram which we have already presented, when viewed from outside. Practitioners know better than that. Of course, the mind of the competent translator starts searching into its stored knowledge of the target world for the elements and relations that would bring its interpretation of the SLT-presented experience home to the communal mind of the target audience. When some of the SLT-activated elements and relations defy initial negotiation, the translator's mind goes back and attempts in-depth search for the optimal functional counterpart in the experiential knowledge of the target audience. What underlies the whole process is a circular relationship of interpretation of the SLT-presented experience and reinterpretation of that 'reading' in terms of what is stored in the communal memory of the intended target audience. It follows that what should always underlie any viable applied linguistic theory of translation is sensitization to interpretation and reinterpretation at its finest. Put another way, students of translation should be rigorously trained in efficient ethnolinguistic 'reading' in SL and equally efficient 'writing' in TL.

In addition to a relevant applied linguistic model of the contrastive structures needed in translation between languages, we require a necessary (though we do not expect it yet to be sufficient) model of contrastive culture analysis. This is needed in order not only to deal with the wording of the text, but also to make sure that the intention of the writer of the SLT is adhered to in the recreation of the text as TLT. By intention here is meant all the culturally and situationally relevant factors that produce - or are intended to produce - a specific effect on the reader.

What is required, for several reasons, is a coherent and systematic taxonomy of constituents, and the interrelations that link these constituents. We consider it essential to break down the process into as many self-contained elements as possible, in order to be able to work on a micro-level in such a way that we are not enmeshed in too many levels of analysis. By doing this we 'compartmentalize' the problems so that solutions at one level do not depend crucially on solutions at other levels simultaneously.

The work of Hymes (1972-1986) focussed on the requirements for an adequate descriptive taxonomy to investigate the ethnography of speaking. The original version of Hymes' taxonomy (1986:59-65) comes in a section headed 'Towards a Descriptive Theory'. Since then it has undergone minor modification in Saville-Troike (1982:137 ff), where it appears under the heading 'Components of Communication'. A recent discussion appears in Coulthard (1985:42-58) under 'Ethnography of Speaking'. Most recently, it has been modified and applied to 'Writing across Language Communities', where Sa'Adeddin (forthcoming b) proposed grouping Hymes' categories in a hierarchy comprising Message Content and Message Form linked by the level of 'Text Acts' which refers to 'the ideas as sequentially mapped on text structure in relation to the norm of interaction in a given language community'. However, as far as we can see, neither Hymes nor any of the other scholars who modified and applied this descriptive tool really attempted to propose an exhaustive, internally consistent theory based on the many descriptions carried out. The requirements of Theory are a little more intensive and extensive. Clearly, the elaboration of Theory involves a major investment in comparative analysis. This said, we would see the proposal of a taxonomy, its prior and subsequent application, to constitute that essential stage extending up to the axiomatic and deductive creation of a theory which will underlie the next stage of descriptive testing, which has still to be attained. In fact, separation of Theory from Descriptions (cf. Mulder & Harvey 1980:15ff) is significant at this stage of model-building. The importance of the distinction lies in the fact that some propositions of science are general rather than particular, and thus not directly verifiable. These explanations (often unfortunately

called laws) form the basis of derived propositions that can be tested directly. The relationship between Theory and Descriptions is that between the general explanations which are not directly testable and the derived principles which can be tested by application to data from specific languages. This distinction is also important in testing our modified version of Hymes' taxonomy in what is perhaps a new context (modelling the translation process), so as not to confuse ourselves or the reader as to what we think we are doing. We do not think we are proposing a theory - yet. But we hope that by developing and testing the best descriptive tools available, we will be contributing to the possible development of such a theory, which is what we ultimately need.

With this philosophical and methodological aside out of the way, we turn to our revised version of Hymes' taxonomy which we have already applied to writing across language communities. It is to be remarked, however, that only when we feel confident that the categories have been tested sufficiently and the varieties within each category listed exhaustively do we consider it sensible to move them out of the pre-hypothetical.

A. Message Content Formative Element:

1. Norm of interpretation (for text)
2. Norm of interaction (in social context)
3. Text End:
   3.1 Main Goal
   3.2 Sub Goal
4. Genre
5. Key
6. Topic:
   6.1 Main
   6.2 Sub topic(s)
7. Text Situation:
   7.1 Setting

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7.2 Scene

8. Participants:

8.1 Sender) text analysis only

8.2 Addressor)

8.3 Receiver/Audience

8.4 Addressee

9. Channel

10. Variety of expression

Text Acts Structure

Message Form Constituents:

1. Print substance (In some cases, Sound substance):

1.1 System of orthography

1.2 Paragraphing

1.3 Punctuation

2. Text grammatical dependencies:

2.1 (Macro) grammatical dependencies - Cohesion:

2.1.1 Junctives

2.1.2 Grammatical/Information structure cohesion

2.1.3 Ellipsis

2.1.4 Parallelism, etc.

2.2 (Micro) grammatical dependencies:

2.2.1 Sentences

2.2.2 Clauses

2.2.3 Phrases

Now an illustration may bring this home to us. Suppose that a malist were to translate the following Arabic text into English:

(3.1) Arabic Text

// laa faDla li9arabiyyin 9alaa ?a9jamiyy-^

^ wa laa li?a9jamiyyin 9alaa 9arabiyy-^

^ wa laa li?byaDa 9alaa ?aswad-^
^ wa laa li?aswada 9alaa ?abyaDa^
^ ?illa bittaqwaa// (ALECSO 1986:54)

The translation will perhaps read as follows:

(3.1a) Semantic Translation

* 'No Arab has an advantage over a non-Arab. a non-Arab over an Arab, a white man over a black man, a black man over a white man, except in piety'.[5]

To find out how the translation differs from the original, we must attempt to see how the two texts differ in terms of how they are experienced by the audiences in question. From the perspective of a native Arabic reader, the translation is both thin and pedestrian. Except for some bland rendition of the ideas, it lacks all the ingredients that make the SLT-presented experience what it is. From the perspective of a native English reader, the translation is perhaps a piece of 20thC sociological journalism or humanistic propaganda, addressed to a relatively uneducated audience.

From the vantage point of a translation practitioner who experiences both (3.1) and (3.1a) together, the two texts are experientially miles apart. (3.1) is a quotation from the Islamic prophetic tradition. The background information required for interpreting the text is knowledge of ancient Arabian society and racial discrimination in pre-Islamic times. The sociolinguistic relationship between the participants is that of a prophet to his disciples among other 7thC Arabs, who take particular pride in their language and its rhetorical devices. The main goal of the text is to distribute knowledge and proselytize the criterion of judgement in the new religion; and the sub-goal is that Arabs should relinquish all pre-Islamic discriminatory practices, and value people on the merits of their piety. The text is a sermon, and the key is authoritative and indirectly directive. The setting is a review of Arab-Islamic values in a

olume entitled *Al-KhuTTatu shshaa-milatu liththaqaafati l9arabiyya* (*The Comprehensive Plan for Arab Culture*). The scene is some underground meeting-place for Muslims in 7thC Arabia. The addressor is Prophet Mohammed preaching the teachings of the new eligion. The immediate receivers are disciples, and the wider ntended audience is all prospective muslims. The text is written-as-spoken' (Sa'Adeddin, forthcoming b), and in consequence, it s aurally-developed to address the ear (cf. Sa'Adeddin 1989:38).

The constituency of the text as a spoken message is very significant. The first information unit is a 'periodic' (Leech & Short 1981:225) sentence, which comprises an anticipatory theme followed by the first constituent of a cleft rheme.

// ^laa/ 'faDla li9ara/ 'biyyin 9ala ?a9ja/ 'miyy-^,

and a remainder of that climactic rheme, which appears at the end of the text: //^ ?illa bit/ 'taqwaa/.

In a natural reading, the anticipatory constituent suggests an analysis into two tonic units, characterized by two different degrees of High Tonality: Extra-High and High respectively. This is significant for three reasons:

(i) The Extra-High Tonic marks the constituent which has to be held in the memory until the final falling tonic is reached.

(ii) The High Tonic marks the non-finality of the anticipatory constituent, and thus the feeling of expectation.

(iii) This second Tonic signals a phonological ellipsis, parallel to the grammatical ellipses in the anticipatory constituents which are introduced between the first portion of the rheme and its climactic remainder.

The grammatical structure of the first periodic sentence is equally significant. In Arabic, /laa/ on its own, which appears at the beginning of the anticipatory constituent, activates the concept of absolute negation in the minds of native Arabic text users. However, a following /?illaa/, which appears in the remainder of the climactic constituent, reduces its function to a conditional negative.

Another significant feature of the text is the three elliptical periodic sub-sentences which separate the anticipatory constituent of the first periodic sentence from the remainder of the rheme:

^wa/ 'laa li?a9ja/ 'miyyin 9alaa 9ara/ 'biyy- ولا عربي على عجمي
^wa/ 'laa li?ab/ 'yaDa 9alaa/ '?aswad-^ ولا أبيض على أسود
^wa/ 'laa li?as/ 'wada 9alaa ?ab/ 'yaDa ^ ولا أسود على أبيض

These sub-sentences are linked with the periodic sentence by phonetic ties, as well as others, which contribute to the 'information structure cohesion' (cf. Sa'Adeddin, forthcoming b) of the text. Apart from the isochronous recurrence of High Tonicity at the end of each sub-sentence, and that of juncture at the beginning and end of each of them, they are linked by the recurrent, text-forming 'inter-utterance *wa*' (cf. Sa'Adeddin 1987a), which functions as a tie linking two information units. (In this case it acts as marker of semi-colon units in the sense of Halliday (1985:3)). Lexically they are linked by the effect of *wa* (or) which triggers the deletion of the preceding wo.d-case ending. Furthermore, they are connected by the effect of /laa/ which prompts the memory of the elipted /faDla/ that the audience have to hold in memory until the end-focus, /?illa bittaqwaa/. They are also grammatically connected with the periodic sentence both by anaphoric and cataphoric ellipsis. The ellipses are anaphoric in the sense that they repeat the structure of the anticipatory constituent omitting /faDla/ (honour) which is recoverable from the co-text. They are cataphoric in the sense that the climactic remainder of the first periodic sentence is, at the same time, the remainder of each and every sub-sentence. What is more, they are connected and equalized by repeating their form of syntactic organization. Besides,

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The concept of structural parallelism is further reinforced by grouping the anticipatory constituents in pairs, each member of which is the reverse of the other in terms of focus. In short, the brevity and stability of the text act is maintained by the strategies of phonetic and grammatical ellipsis and parallelism.

Our modified version of Hymes' taxonomy gives us a more concise, systematic and principled framework for categorizing the SLT-presented experience:

Ethnolinguistic Reading of (3.1)

A. Message Content Formative Elements:

1. Norm of interpretation: Knowledge of ancient Arabian society and racial discrimination in pre-Islamic times.

2. Norm of interaction: Superior to inferior: prophet to disciples who take particular pride in their language and its rhetorical devices.

3. Text End:

3.1 Main Goal: Distribution of knowledge and proselytization of the criterion of judgement in Islam.

3.2 Sub-Goal: Muslims should relinquish all pre-Islamic discriminatory practices, and value people on the merits of their piety.

4. Genre: A sermon.

5. Key: Serious, authoritative, indirectly directive.

6. Topic: The criterion of judgement in Islam.

7. Text Situation:

7.1 Setting: A chapter reviewing Arab-Islamic values in a volume on Arab culture.

7.2 Scene: An underground meeting-place of 7thC Muslims.

8. Participants:

8.1 Speaker: Prophet Mohammed, charismatic leader, masterly rhetorician.

8.2 Immediate Audience: Disciples among other fresh converts to Islam.

8.3 Intended Audience: All mankind, including Arabs.

9. Channel: Written-as-spoken Arabic prose, aurally-developed to address the ear.

10. Variety: Old Standard Arabic prose.

3. Text Acts (i.e. text plan structure): Suspense by end-focus; psycholinguistic effect by focus-reversal; and tight packaging of message content by information structure cohesion signalled both phonologically and syntactically.

C. Message Form Constituents:

1. Print/Sound Substance:

1.1 System of Orthography: Arabic.

1.2 Paragraphing: Not applicable.

1.3 Punctuation: No punctuation marks in the Standard Average European sense; instead /wa/ (lexically 'or'; orthographically ;) marks the boundaries of anticipatory constituents, while tonal structure marks the cleft thematic structure.

2. Text Cohesion Structure:

2.1 A string of syntactically and phonologically anticipatory

themes inclusive of first portion of rheme; end-focus functioning as remainder of rheme for all anticipatory constituents; antonymous lexical items lending cohesion to alternative states.

2.2 Recurrence of rhythmic patterns, intonational patterns and syntactic patterns, conducive to phonetic and syntactic ellipsis and phonetic and syntactic parallelism.

Note for reinterpretation: Items that might require appropriation from the formal point of view, because they require ethnolinguistic glossing to allow for experiential matching include the following marked features:

cohesive markers: laa VB li Y(n) 9alaa Z(n)

variation repetition of wa laa li Z 9alaa X

elliptical suspense for three clauses, before resolution at very end (in marked position even for fourth and final clause)

rhyme scheme/rhythm.

To recreate this ethnolinguistic reading of (3.1) in the mind of the target audience, the text may be translated as follows:

(3.1b) Ethnolinguistic Translation

Be he an Arab he shall not be honoured more than a non Arab;

Be he a non-Arab he shall not be honoured more than an Arab;

Be he a white man he shall not be honoured more than a black man;

Be he a black man he shall not be honoured more than a white man;

But by the depth of his piety.

Here the religious form and content have been fused by the use of a 'King James Bible' version, attempting to use the slightly archaic,

rhythmic and rhetorical style of that work which has the relevant associations for a passage such as this. It tells the reader of the TLT that this is a religious text from the very first phase. The repetitions and counterpoint of negative and positive, as well as the suspense of resolutions in the final line, mirror the prophetic style whether in Arabic or in English, and give the target reader almost all the ingredients that make the SLT experience what it is.

To the extent that the experiential reading of (3.1) and knowledge of the target world communal memory are exhaustive and comprehensive, SLT-TLT experiential matching is feasible.

In the light of this ethnolinguistic approach, we may now turn to another example, this time from contemporary Standard Arabic. The text has been translated by a free-lance practitioner working for one of the translation offices in Kuwait.

(3.2) Arabic Text:

'wa haadhihi lkalimatu llatii nuSaddiru bihaa haadhihi lkhuTTata hiya kalimatu shukrin mustaHaqqatin liSaani9iiha wa mubdi9iiha fii ?iithaarin kariimin 9an sa9atin qaadiratin wa 9aTaa?in mas?uulin ?ilaa ?akhii ra?iisi llajnati wa li?ikhwati lqaadiriina ?a9Daa?iha wa ?ilaa amaanatiha wa ?amiiniha l9aammi 9alaa sa9yihim wa badhlihim li?ummatihim maa yabqaa lahum fiiha yadan baiDaa?a baaratan mada ddahr'.

(ALECSO,1986:11)

(3.2a) Semantic Translation:

* 'These words with which we preface this plan are words of well deserved thanks to its makers, its creators in their generous self-denial, great abilities and responsible contribution: to my brother, the Chairman of the Committee, and my competent brothers, its members, the Secretariat, and the Secretary General for their efforts and

contribution which will remain for them in it a blessed hand for ever'.

As it stands, (3.2a) may invite native English readers to comment on the message content and message form in these terms. The structure of this discourse - words describing words describing the efforts of the members with thanks - gives the reader the impression that these remarks are pro-forma, pre-determined and so not sincere. The use of such terms as 'brothers' and 'competent brothers' is liable to make the reader feel that the writer is merely trying to 'butter up' the audience. Added to the effusively rhetorical tone of the text, this creates a distancing effect, reinforced by the fact that much seems redundant. 'Words with which we preface this plan': clearly words are words and that which is written is a preface. Again, 'its makers' and 'its creators' are redundant in the context of one another: so too with 'efforts' and 'contribution'. 'Well deserved' seems superfluous given what follows. The sentence structure is overloaded, and although the sentence is technically correct, it is a run-on one. Besides, 'for them in it' is an awkward construction which compounds the difficulty of grasping the figurative expression that follows.

However, these comments are null and void in the Arabic social context. Without the above 'seasoning' which may put native English readers off, (3.2) will sound dull and dreary to the addressees, and the writer would be regarded as arrogant and standoffish. Here we have a case where the norm of interaction determines the interpretation of the text. For an experienced translator, the decision to reproduce the text as it would be expected by the target world audience is usually made subconsciously. The driving force behind such a decision would be the built-in battery of strategies that he has developed over many years of practice. But, for students of translation, we would argue that this can be systematically done by shifting the whole emphasis of translation teaching to sensitising them to ethnolinguistic interpretation in SL and ethnolinguistic reinterpretation for the target world audience. Sensitivity to these constituents of the translation process can be taught, by means less drastic than a twenty-year apprenticeship. Once this approach becomes clear, the curriculum for

translation studies must include both exhaustive training in analysis of the ethnography of texting, and exposure to a sufficient range of texts to reveal the interaction between these aspects.

If the translator of (3.2) were aware of the contrasts between the SL-community and the TL-community in regard to the ethnolinguistic distance, his translation could have predicted the effect of maintaining the SLT-social distance on his target audience. In the translation teaching situation this can be discovered and duly remedied by ethnolinguistic analysis of the SLT as well as ethnolinguistic prediction of the expectations of the target world audience under similar circumstances.

Ethnolinguistic Reading of (3.2)

A. Message Content Formative Elements:

1. Norm of interpretation: Knowledge of social distance and terms of address in the Arab world.

2. Norm of interaction: Close, intimate; colleague to colleague/equal to equals.

3. Text end:

3.1 Main Goal: To ensure plan is put into effect.

3.2 Sub-goal: To thank committee and immediate aides.

4. Genre: Preface.

5. Key: Formal, yet personal.

6. Topic: Acknowledgement.

7. Text Situation:

7.1 Setting: Preamble to book (*Comprehensive Plan for Arab Culture*, 1986).

7.2 Scene: Thanksgiving.

8. Participants:

8.1 Sender: Dr. MuHyiddiin Saaber (as individual).

8.2 Addressor: Dr. MuHyidiin Saaber (as Sec-Gen, ALECSO).

8.3 Addressees: Members of committee.

8.4 Audience: Arab nation (especially those involved with culture).

9. Channel: Written-as-spoken.

10. Variety: Modern Standard Arabic.

B. Text Acts: maintaining solidarity with colleagues; pressing the decision makers to put the Plan into effect by highlighting its importance.

C. Message Form Constituents:

1. Print Substance:

1.1 System of Orthography: Arabic.

1.2 Paragraphing: Not applicable.

1.3 Punctuation: Unsystematic.

2. Text Grammatical Dependencies:

2.1 Information structure cohesion: text forming elements functioning as morphologized punctuation markers (cf. Sa'Adeddin 1987b).

2.2 Elliptical structures.

Note for Reinterpretation: Items that might require checking from the formal point of view, because they require ethnolinguistic glossing to allow for the best possible experiential match:

repetition of 'words'

redundancy of 'makers', 'creators', etc.

use and repetition of 'brother(s)'

import of 'generous self-denial'

segmentation and restructuring of the text in three sentences in the following sequence: thanks in general, specific thanks, reason for thanksgiving.

With the above ethnolinguistic reading in mind, we may translate (3.2) as follows:

(3.2b) Ethnolinguistic Translation

> We wish to sincerely thank those whose hard work, great abilities and sacrifice made this Plan a reality. I offer my personal gratitude to the Chairman of the Committee, the members of the Committee, the Secretariat and the Secretary General. They have made a great contribution to their nation, one which will remain for them a blessed hand forever.

What we may note on the evidence of the above examples (which we have advertently kept to the minimum for space limitations) and the experience of the author as a translator of Arabic into English over many years is that the interaction between message content and message form is simultaneous. But, when it comes to interpretation and reinterpretation, the message content formative elements seem to be more important than what we now consider lower level categories.

In this section we have emphasized the importance of interpretation and reinterpretation as the two major constituents of the translation process. We have also tried to implicitly show how shifting the focus in the performance of translation practitioners from low-level problem-solving to ethnolinguistic 'reading' and 'writing' can contribute to the achievement of an optimal experiential match of the 'Copy' of the SLT-presented experience. Reinterpretation, in the sense

we adopt here, may require, if needs be, adjustment of the SLT-presented experience to the ethnolinguistic expectations of the target world audience, or spelling out the whole gamut of ethnolinguistic associations that the new audience deserve some feeling of. Beneath the de-emotionalized form of the text there is a world to be plunged into. But the need may arise when the translator has to resort to literal translation. Be that as it may, all decisions relevant to which strategy to use may be dictated by the context in which the TLT is to be utilized.

The import of this approach for translation teaching is that of new orientation: translation must be taught as communication across the frontiers of language communities. With this shift of the centre of attention, the translation curriculum may be designed to internalise in would-be translators a type of competence which, as far as we can see at the moment, comprises the following elements:

i) comprehensive communicative competence in 'the linguistic repertoires' (Blom & Gumperz 1986:411) of the language communities in question;

ii) ability to interpret the text as a socially situated, linguistically codified cultural communicative event;

iii) ability to judge native perceivers' attitudes and responses;

iv) ability to discover the designs which the producer has on his audience;

v) knowledge of the ethnolinguistic repertoire available to his specific audience (or required for the situation in which the TLT is to be used);

vi) knowledge of the range of devices that contribute to the actualization of experiential matching between the SLT and TLT;

vii) ability to write satisfactorily in the target language; and

viii) ability to evaluate translational performance by contrasting the TLT back to the SLT.

4. Concluding Remarks

In this paper we have attempted to introduce an introspective view of the process of translation. We have disintegrated the major levels of the process, viz. interpretation and reinterpretation, into sufficiently small modules for testing in the teaching situation. Some fellow scholars may criticise the approach on the grounds that the process of translation is 'a black box'. But we would argue that such processes are amenable to investigation, especially in the light of the progress made in the fields of sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and ethnolinguistic methodology. Among the techniques which we see as relevant to investigating the process of translation are:

i) Introspection and making explicit the procedures (and ultimately the process) used by translators.

ii) The isolation of linguistic variables using techniques from sociolinguistics, and measuring their differential and combinatorial effects as cues to native perception.

iii) Ethnolinguistic methods involving the elicitation of ethnosemantic data and background information.

iv) The use of psycholinguistic measures such as Osgood's Semantic Differential, and the derived method of the 'Subjective Reaction Test' (adapted from sociolinguistics), for the quantification of subjective evaluation.

The validity of monitoring the introspections of translators may be questioned, but it should be noted that introspection within the mind of the native speaker, and the controlled observation of his own performance, have been a standard technique since the earliest days of language study, at least as far back as the Greeks. We would argue against Lefevere (1981) and Kupsch-Losereit (1985) among others that introspections are daily the very basis of most linguistic hypothesis-forming processes, and thus the Process of Translation is at no greater disadvantage in employing them. However, it is

important to note that introspection and intuition, while essential in the hypothesis forming stage, are never sufficient as testing techniques.

Clearly, work on the development of a viable applied linguistic Theory of Translation has a long way to go. Only when we manage to answer the question which translation practitioners and theoreticians have avoided: 'What is it that makes you accept my translation, or me accept yours?' (to paraphrase Harvey 1980:29), can we claim to have developed a Theory of Translation. Proposing a Theory of Translation calls for an explicit scientific method, based on the assumptions of testability, replicability, simplicity, adequacy and comprehensiveness. The task is complex, but we must not be daunted by its complexities.

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